

15 Words 15c

Farmer Classified Ads

Phone 1208

1917?

By  
EDWIN BALMERCopyright, 1916, by the Chicago  
Tribune

(Continued.)

The battalion was leaving the park and turning into Michigan avenue; an order was shouted down the column; the clanging of a fire bell warned every one in time how to interpret the order. The battalion sprang to the side of the road and let the fire engine and truck race by. The sky ahead and also to the west was glowing red in districts where no factory chimneys should crimson the clouds, and distinctly a shot and now a series of rifle shots echoed out of one of the side streets. A number of handbills were blowing down the boulevard; as they swirled under the street lamps they showed great red letters. Jim Ashby and others of the soldiers stooped and picked up some of the papers. Jim read as he passed the best light:

"Fellow Citizens—Further resistance is useless. We are helpless. Let us make terms before the men of our army follow the men of the navy to death in useless slaughter."

"Kilbane read it at the same time and laughed. 'So those are what they're plasterin' up everywhere!'"

He jerked toward the windows of a shop which they were passing. A large placard was pasted there with the same red letters as the handbills. Other placards appeared on other windows; upon mail boxes, pasted to the fronts of buildings and upon the doors. It was plain that the agents of the prince had had them printed before the great naval battle, ready to put up after the disaster.

Kilbane crumpled his bill and tossed it away. "We too dispirited! Corporal, dear, will ye be keepin' a close watch on Swenson there? The enemy's advertisin' is makin' him melancholic. He's like to desert!"

Arriving at the station, Company F followed Company E out on the platform beside the cars which had just been cleared of the refugees, the soldiers boarded the train, found seats, deposited rifles and packs, and as the train would not be ready to start for some minutes many of the men went out to the platforms again, watching other trains arriving from the east and other companies of recruits going to the cars.

Men wearing sabers and spurs—a cavalry troop—tramped by. Jim gazed at the hats of those who were in uniform and observed that they belonged to the First Illinois cavalry. They had led their horses aboard stock cars on freight tracks far down the yards and were returning to find places in the passenger trains.

A trooper, somewhat slighter and younger than the others, strolled proudly along, and Jim, as he saw him, felt his heart stop suddenly and then race faster. The boy turned more directly toward Jim, and each recognized the other.

"Mart!" Jim called. "Mart! So here's where you are!"

The boy, at the first recognition, recoiled; then, seeing avoidance of Jim was impossible, he approached swiftly.

"My name's Wallace!" he whispered in warning. "Wallace Scott!"

"He looked about cautiously and plainly was disappointed that no one seemed to have noticed that Jim had called him by another name."

"You're enlisted?" Jim charged him. "Well, why don't you write home to tell them that, anyway? Of course, they've supposed you enlisted, but they're almost crazy, not hearing from you."

"I've written 'em—or mother anyway," Mart defended himself. "I mailed it just a minute ago. I was going to write her as soon as we got ordered out of Chicago. I'm not old enough to enlist, you know, but I'm big enough, so I had to come where no one knew me. My name's Wallace Scott, please remember, and I'm twenty years old, and I haven't got any parents or any one else. Think what I've told them, and I'll stick to it. I can ride pretty well, you know, so I got into the cavalry. What are you going to do about it?"

"You're going east, Mart?"

"I suppose so; we're here to take a train; that's all I know. I say, Jim! Mart's hand now caught Jim's sleeve. 'How are they at home? You've heard, of course?'"

"Yes, I've heard," Jim admitted. "At your house every one's well—except for worrying about you."

"Mother? And father?"

Mart had to be assured of both separately.

"And Agnes?"

"Yes, she's all right too."

"What's the matter, Jim?"

"Nothing."

"Say, what're you doing here, boy? I knew you'd enlisted, too, of course. You didn't stay back. But—well, Agnes hasn't come to yet? Is that it? She's still in a trance?"

"She's broken our engagement, if that's what you're getting at," Jim informed.

"Because you're going to fight! The little idiot. What do you care for?" Mart commented, younger brother like. "Then, you haven't been hearing from her? You've been hearing only from your horse?"

"No, I've heard from Agnes too."

"I meant to ask, Jim. Anything about Bob Wendell?"

"No, nothing yet."

Connor shouted Jim's name; the engine at the front of the train blew a warning blast. Jim and Mart clasped hands.

"Good luck, Mart!"

"Good luck, Jim!"

Mart ran down the platform for another train; Jim turned to his car and found his seat beside Kilbane. The Irish boy displayed a bit of delicate, belated and embroidered linen.

"I discovered it thrust because the cushion so," he demonstrated. "She was a fine and fair one who doted here on the westward trip!"

## CHAPTER XVI.

The Success of the Spies.

A night came Jim sat up straight and looked about. Many were unable to sleep. A boy across from him was opening an envelope, which had been opened before, and was taking out a letter to read; it was a girl's handwriting; Jim could see that. He had Agnes' last letter in his pocket, but he had no impulse at all to read it.

A few men were passing up and down the aisles. There was one boy with a remarkably handsome and sensitive face, with thick black hair cut short, and with excellent eyes. He wore the loose blouse and knickerbockers and puttees of an aviator's costume. As he went by Jim watched him curiously. He did not belong to the battalion, but Jim had heard that volunteer aviators would join the regiment when it took to the field. Evidently this was one of the amateur aviators who had volunteered for such service. The boy went forward through the train and then returned. Jim got a better look at his face, now, and he sat up straighter, suddenly. The boy, glancing at Jim, also seemed to start, but if he did he immediately recovered himself and went on. Jim jumped up and stood staring down the aisle. He knew that boy; he was sure of it. But where had he seen him before, and under what circumstances? Jim's pulses were pounding. He certainly knew that face, and though he could not place it yet, the semi-recognition stirred him with hot alarm. Surely he had seen that boy before! Ah, now he knew! He had seen him, but not as a boy. That was a girl when Jim last saw her—a girl in an evening gown and with her heavy hair, uncut, dressed in the latest fashion; she was the girl who laughed at him as he pointed his revolver to frighten her, and who dared him to shoot her as she advanced upon him when he backed toward the window in the house of the spies!

She reached the end of the car, and as she opened the door she glanced back casually and saw him standing and staring at her; she hesitated a moment as though to make sure she was the object of his attention, then she went through the door and let it close behind her. Jim hurried down the aisle and dashed after her into the vestibule between the coaches; he crossed the platforms to the door of the next coach to the rear before he saw that the girl had not gone further; she was standing quietly at the side of the platform of the rear car with her back to the door, which, when the trap over the steps was lifted, opened to the side of the train. There was the customary light in the vestibule which showed her expression clearly.

"Good evening!" she nodded pleasantly to him as he turned toward her.

"Good evening!" he returned, amazed.

"This is awfully hot," she said, unbuckling her blouse at the throat and baring her neck. "If any one comes out keep between him and me, won't you? Oh, this is very much better!"

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"You think it inconceivable that I have turned patriot?"

"Turned patriot?"

"Or, rather," she corrected, "that I may have been patriot all the time?"

"What do you mean?"

"So you escaped from the hospital?"

"Oh, quite four days ago." She reached into a pocket and drew forth a box of cigarettes, opened it and offered it to him.

"You are going to smoke?" he asked her.

"No, but I wish you to, if you want."

"You were smoking when—the other evening?"

"Yes; there were reasons then, but I confess—I do not like it. So will not you for me? I may cool myself still, and a puff of smoke will give me time to cover if any one comes."

He selected a cigarette and held it. She offered him a lighter. "What is it?"

"Oh, you fear poison?" She snatched the cigarette from his fingers, put it between her lips, lighted it, and puffed a moment, then offered it to him. He took it, coloring, and put it between his lips.

"What are you doing here?" he repeated.

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HIGH WAGES PAID TO  
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peated.

"Have I less right to inquire that of you?"

"Of me?"

"Yes; you were in that house at the same time as I. Has it never occurred to you since that we might have been about the same business?"

"So that was the plan of her audacity."

"Hardly, I should say," he returned coolly.

"Besides, seeing me there, you discovered who I was, perhaps?"

"I certainly discovered who you were!"

"I am Marion Marlett, of course," she admitted almost casually. "S. D. Marlett, who is now in jail, is my uncle; some of the others are my cousins; in some ways, of course, I was—and am with them, but it should not be impossible to imagine, I should think, that in other ways I am not."

"In what ways, if I may ask?"

"Not in that tone!" she forbade, facing him with eyes suddenly aflame and with her little hands clenched. "I am as good an American as you, I think—and running at least as much risk to do my bit."

"Your bit?" he repeated.

"Why not?"

"For America?"

"Of course!"

"But—"

"Smoke, please," she requested quickly, holding her jacket close about her throat again. Some one passed through the vestibule without halting; the car doors closed and Jim and Marion Marlett were alone again.

"If you want to know why I was in that house that night," she burst out, "it is very simple. I live there; it was my home. Put yourself in my place for a few moments, please, Mr. James Ashby, and tell me what you would have done!"

Jim felt the blood tingling in him at her repeating his name. So she had inquired of him. Then he realized that inquiry on her part implied no personal concern; as one of the spies threatened by him, Marion Marlett naturally would have attempted to learn how he came upon them.

"When I found out, during the war in Europe, that my uncles and cousins were planning and preparing for the regent to make war here, what good would I have done by denouncing them?" she demanded. "I had no good proof against them, and, besides, lots of people already were saying that the regent had his secret agents here, but the authorities never paid any attention. Pretty soon I got evidence; I admit that, but it wasn't any better evidence than was being printed and published in some of the newspapers every day; and no one was paying any attention to things like that. So I knew I'd simply give myself away if I said anything and gain nothing. My uncles—Mr. Marlett and Mr. Gervis—"

"The one whose house you were in that night?"

"Yes; where I was living since my mother died; he was her brother. Well, my uncles found out that I knew about them and they thought I was with them. They knew I was born here, of course, and was brought up here, and went to schools here, and had all my friends here, but they were sure I must be like themselves and my cousins; they thought nothing could count against me so with me, but I didn't let them know it. They told me a great deal and I found out more and more. So I knew, a long time ago, that this war was coming, but as thousands of other people were saying it and no one was doing anything, the only thing I could see to do was to stay where I was, and—well, see to it, if I could, that some of my uncles' schemes wouldn't work out the way they wanted."

(To Be Continued.)

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